REMARKS

New claims 31 through 44 are added. Accordingly claims 1-44 are all the claims pending in the application.

Regarding preliminary matters, the Examiner has not acknowledged in the Office Action receipt of formal drawings submitted on September 7, 1999, and again on March 7, 2002. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner acknowledge receipt and the status of the formal drawings in the next Office Action.

Claims 1-30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Heath et al. ("Heath") in view of Jindal. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection at least because the asserted combination does not include all the limitations recited in the claims.

Claims 1, 11, and 21, are directed to methods, apparatuses, and articles of manufacture, respectively, for determining access to a system. These claims recite, for each of a plurality of requests, determining whether to allow access to the system using an access vector to identify an available access object.

Heath is relied on for receiving one or more requests to access a system, but the Examiner admits that Heath fails to teach, for each request, determining whether to allow access to the system using an access vector to identify an available access object. Jindal is relied upon to fulfill that deficiency by disclosing a lookup table that indicates a network address of a server having an available application. The Examiner asserts that it would have been obvious to combine the teachings of Heath with Jindal to allow for load-balancing among a plurality of servers.

Even assuming *arguendo* that it would have been obvious to combine the teachings of Heath and Jindal, as asserted in the Office Action, which it is respectfully submitted that it would not have been, such a combination does not satisfy all the limitations of claims 1, 11 and 21. This is because the combination does not determine whether to "allow access to a system using an access vector to identify an available access object," as required by the claims.

Heath, at col. 6, lines 23-55, discloses granting a connection to a client by using conventional username/password authentication and validating requests for access to an application program based upon a subscriber privilege level associated with the client.

Jindal relates to distributing a computing load among a plurality of servers. To balance the load, Jindal uses a lookup table 102, shown in Fig. 1, to determine an address of a pre-selected preferred server having an instance of a requested application program. The lookup table 102 includes an entry for the application program's identity as exposed to clients, that indicates "a network address (e.g., an IP or Internet protocol address) for one of servers 110, 112, and 113." See col. 6, lines 13-22.

Jindal's lookup table is not used to determine whether to allow access to an application program, but rather to retrieve the network address of a current preferred server for the requested application. Jindal also does not use the lookup table to identify an access object but rather to identify a server running an application program and that has a light load. Jindal neither teaches nor suggests that the server or the application program is an access object.

Modifying the teachings of Heath with the lookup table of Jindal would merely result in Heath, after determining that access should be granted to a requested application

program using conventional authentication techniques, using a lookup table to determine the network address of a server running that application program. The combination would not use the lookup table to determine an available access object, since the combination would already have determined whether to grant access before consulting the lookup table. Further, it is respectfully submitted that a person of ordinary skill in the art would understand that the "access objects" recited in the claims are objected-oriented constructs and not merely a lookup table or servers running a requested application program or the network addresses of those servers listed in a lookup table, since neither is an object-oriented construct. Accordingly, Heath and Jindal, either alone or in combination, neither teaches nor suggests, "determining whether to allow access to the system using an access vector to identify an available access object," as required by claims 1, 11 and 21.

New claims 31-44 are added and recite "determining whether to allow access to the system using an access vector comprised of one or more access indicators, wherein only one request at a time uses the access vector." An example of an access indicator given in the specification is an access object, although an access indicator is not limited to an object-oriented construct. Support for the limitation relating to only one request at a time using the access vector is found in the specification at least at page 7, lines 4-6, and page 10, lines 11-15.

The prior art neither teaches nor suggests all the limitations of the new claims, including an access vector comprised of access indicators in which "only one request at a time uses the access vector." The Examiner asserts on page 4 of the Office Action, with respect to claim 10 of the original application, that Jindal, at col. 12, lines 56-67 teaches

"allowing one request at a time to manipulate the access vector." It is respectfully submitted, however, that Jindal neither teaches nor suggests "only one request at a time us[ing] the access vector," as required in the new claims. Jindal describes, within the text cited by the Examiner (i.e., at col. 12, line 58-59), that, "one IMO is registered or created for each instance of an application", and shows in Fig. 3 that a plurality of IMO's collect information and report status results in parallel. Furthermore, at Fig. 1, Jindal depicts multiple client connections accessing central server 100 containing the lookup table 102. Therefore, even assuming *arguendo* that Jindal teaches an access vector, which Applicant strongly asserts is not the case, the Examiner's assertion that Jindal teaches "allowing one request at a time to manipulate the access vector" is not supported by the text cited by the Examiner (i.e., col. 12, lines 56-67), or by the supporting figures. In fact, nowhere does Jindal teach or suggest limiting access to the lookup table to only one request at a time, such as by limiting access to the lookup table to a single thread at a time. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the prior art does not teach or suggest all the limitations of new independent claims 31 and 38.

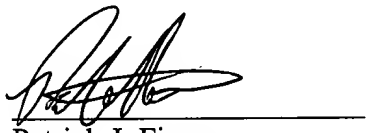
New dependent claims 32-37 and 39-44 contain by reference all the limitations of claim 31 and 38, respectively, and hence, are patentable for at least the same reasons. Support for claims 32 and 39 is found in the specification at least at page 6, lines 21-27. Support for claims 33 and 40 is found in the specification at least at page 7, line 1, through page 8, line 24. Support for claim 34 and 41, and 35 and 42, is found in the specification at least at page 10, line 17, through page 12, line 21. Finally, support for claims 36 and 43, and 37 and 44, is found in the specification at least at page 9, lines 7-27.

The remaining claims contain by reference all the limitations of one of the independent claims, and hence, are not rendered unpatentable by a Heath/Jindal combination for at least the same reasons.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to find the application in condition for allowance. However, if for any reason the Examiner believes that the application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned to resolve any issues and to expedite the disposition of the application.

Applicant hereby petitions for any extension of time that may be required to maintain the pendency of this case, and any required fee for such extension is to be charged to Deposit Account No. 05-0460.

Respectfully submitted,



Patrick J. Finnan
Registration No. 39,189

EPSTEIN, EDELL, SHAPIRO, FINNAN & LYTLE, LLC
1901 Research Blvd., Suite 400
Rockville, Maryland 20850-3164
(301) 424-3640

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